



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY
LANSING



NANNETTE M. BOWLE
DIRECTOR

August 5, 2003

Ms. Joyce A. Thomas, Regional Administrator
Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families, Region V
233 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 400
Chicago, Illinois 60601-5519

Re: Adoption Assistance Eligibility

Dear Ms. Thomas:

Thank you for your letter received June 3, 2003. We appreciate and share your concern regarding the contradiction between federal and state requirements for adoption support subsidy (Social Security Act sec. 473(a)(2) and 473(c), *vis a vis* MCL 400.115g).

Your letter first directs that we amend our State Plan to conform with federal regulations, specifically Section 4, Adoption Assistance Payments. We have undertaken the policy and political analysis and budgetary review to determine the best possible amendments. Second, your letter asks us to reconsider previous eligibility decisions made under Michigan law, contrary to federal regulations.

Kathryn Fehrman, Deputy Director, Service Delivery, has spoken with Ms. Putyra of your office to establish a time line for the amendments and to ensure progress is made in this regard. Ms. Putyra has already been working with our management on other matters, and I understand the working relationship is a healthy and constructive one. We are grateful for ACF's guidance to maintain a plan which continues to meet federal requirements and policies.

As you correctly stated, Michigan's legislation is contradictory to the federal legislation as well, so our policy changes will have to occur in tandem with statutory change. Please rest assured that we will do everything in our power to ensure that children awaiting adoption do not have to wait a moment longer than necessary. We will keep you informed of our progress.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, or Kathryn Fehrman at 517.335-5213 with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Nannette M. Bowler

c: Barbara Putyra, ACF
Donald Weatherspoon, FIA
Kathryn Fehrman, FIA
Jean Hoffman, FIA
Bill Johnson, FIA
Kate Young, FIA

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